
High mobility... to have a job ?

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Abstract

Social and spatial mobility is a key value of late modern societies. Necessity to move is linked to flexibility needs of the labour force and more generally is supposed to be a necessary condition for career success. Consequently, increasing numbers of persons are practicing spatially “reversible” forms of high spatial mobility, such as daily or weekly long-duration commuting and work-related frequent trips. (Vincent-Geslin & Kaufmann, 2012).

This paper examines the link between these mobilities and employment drawing on mixed methods. Data come from both the European longitudinal survey “Job mobilities and family lives in Europe” (Schneider & Collet, 2010) and qualitative interviews conducted in France among a population of “reversible” job-related mobile persons.

Findings show to what extent unemployment risks play a central role on inclination to mobility. While some people limit their willingness to travel or move because of familial circumstances (e.g., arrival of a child, partner changes), others declare themselves ready to move or commute over long durations more than ever – despite low mobility skills and quite low access to rapid transport infrastructures. Another result concerns, in crisis regions, the higher tendency to move compared to commute, as if arbitrage between family life and work life were unbalanced and anchorages reassessed, to ensure an active work life. These results raise new questions about peoples’ adaptation and resignation in long-duration decision making.

Keywords

Job mobility – commuting – relocation – inclination to mobility

Introduction

Europeans are spending more and more time travelling for job reasons. Long-duration commuting to and from work, frequent trips with nights spent away from home, or dual residences and long-distance relationships with partners are more and more common in people's everyday life. This article examines these forms of job-related mobility that we call high mobility.

These trends should be seen in a context of the increasing pressure to be mobile and flexible exerted on today's societies and economies. It implies localisation and mobility choices, depending on different types of constraints. In this context, this paper aims at understanding the influence of representations of high mobility and mobility potential on job access. Especially towards motility, readiness to be or to become high mobile appears to be a critical dimension.

We begin with a theoretical discussion that aims to situate our investigation in the literature on the link between job-related mobility and employment. We shall then present methods and data used. The third section of the article concerns how people perceive situations of high mobility. In Section 4, our analysis focuses on the way people are ready to travel or move (or not). Typology developed and individual evolution between 2007 and 2011 allow discussing the impacts mobility inclination have on employment and unemployment. The article concludes on a discussion around a larger mobility potential concept, to highlight to what extent individual accesses and skills match with readiness declared.

1. Job-related mobility in a flexible world. Context and theory

The average amount of time spent travelling has tended to increase for Europeans in recent years. This trend has been observed in Great Britain (Lyons & Chatterjee, 2008; Department for Transport 2010), the Netherlands (Wee et al. 2006), Sweden (Sandow, 2011), France (Hubert, 2009; Vincent-Geslin & Joly, 2012) and Switzerland (OFS, 2012). The increase calls into question the stability of travel time budgets (Joly et al., 2006), which implies the idea of a reinvestment in distance of the gains in time from high-speed transportation and communication (Zahavi & Talvitie, 1980). Several factors can be suggested to explain these transformations. Over the last fifty years we have experienced a compression of space and time (Harvey, 1989) hitherto unknown in the history of humankind. Spatial and temporal barriers have tended to disappear with the globalisation of the economy and the development of transport and communication systems. Indeed, today's capitalist dynamic has progressively weakened national institutional barriers to globalise economic and financial flows. At the same time, road, rail and air travel systems have improved considerably, allowing more people and goods to be transported faster and at a lower cost. Lastly, today's long-distance communications allow information to be transmitted all over the world immediately. These factors have participated in an overall acceleration of contemporary lifestyles (Rosa, 2010; Mongin, 2011), but have also profoundly changed people's travel in terms of frequency, spatial range and speed.

While the average time spent travelling appears to have increased, this is partly due to a very mobile section of the population. One of the consequences of the transformations cited above is the emergence of new forms of mobility, known as intensive and extensive mobilities (Elliott & Urry, 2010) or high mobilities (Schneider & Meil, 2008; Schneider & Collet, 2010), expressions that emphasise their intensity from a spatial and temporal point of view. More explicitly, the high mobilities discussed in this article include long-duration commuting, dual residence (which implies return trips once or several times a week) and frequent work-related trips. Relatively few studies were made of these mobilities until the early 2000s, as they do not belong to classic forms of mobility, i.e. local mobilities, travel, residential mobilities and migrations. Because of this, most quantitative databases are not suitable for analysis (Vincent-Geslin & Kaufmann, 2012). 7% of the paid working population in six European countries (Belgium, France, Germany, Poland, Spain and Switzerland) commutes for a long duration on a daily basis, i.e. more than two hours travel there and back (Lück & Ruppenthal, 2010). This can be described as long-duration commuting. At the same time, from 3 to 5% of the same population have multilocal practices, defined by more than 60 nights spent away from their main residence (Meil, 2008). The emergence of these high mobilities raises the question of their determining factors and of possible inequalities.

The world we live in has become a mobile world in which the pressure to be mobile and flexible has increased over the years (Sheller & Urry, 2006, Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Harvey, 1989). More specifically, this pressure concerns the labour market. The reduction of permanent contracts, replaced by shorter and more precarious contracts (short-term or temporary contracts and part-time jobs) is making the labour market less stable (Wenglerski, 2006), especially for the less qualified (Bihr & Pfefferkorn, 1999). Growing job insecurity has established mobility and flexibility as basic social values or social norms (Bacqué & Fol, 2007). Employers thus expect their employees to accept job-related travel, whether this involves short journeys or longer trips abroad (Kaufmann, 2011). Likewise, in most European societies, job-seekers are required to be prepared to travel to find work. In Switzerland, for

example, the unemployed are required to accept any job offer deemed suitable by the unemployment scheme, with the criteria for suitability referring, among other things, to a limitation of commuting times to four hours a day¹. Furthermore, migration within the continent is strongly encouraged by the European Commission to optimise the functioning of the different national labour markets and Europe's economy in general (Van Houtum & Van der Velde 2004).

The way in which people situate themselves in space reveals social differentiations. Finding shared accommodation when both members of a household do not work in the same city, or when households find their choices limited because of financial restrictions will, therefore, have an impact on the journeys to be made, especially to reach the workplace (Orfeuill, 2010; Holmes, 2004; Deding et al., 2009; Wiel, 1999). This results in mobilities or high mobilities. C. Vignal (2005) takes into consideration inequalities that are intrinsically linked to the residential mobilities imposed by the necessity of having a job. The author studies the way several persons react to a dismissal and in what extent they consider the possibility of moving to find another job. Our study has a similar aim, but specifically examines high mobilities.

Possible inequalities can be highlighted by means of the degree of pressure associated with the choice of entering into a situation of high mobility. Fewer than half the German 20-59 year-olds studied by N. Schneider, R. Limmer and K. Ruckdeschel (Limmer, 2004) became mobile through their own initiative (with great autonomy in the decision-making). For the others, mobility is shown to be a choice forced upon them or an ambivalent situation with chosen and endured aspects. At the same time, high mobilities often reveal unstable social, domestic or professional situations (Belton Chevallier, 2009).

¹ <http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/19820159/index.html>

2. Methodology : Mixed methods and longitudinal approaches

Overall, there is insufficient relevant data to fully quantify and qualify high mobilities. Mobility surveys are usually conducted on a city-wide scale, which does not allow us to take high mobilities into consideration, although some sources of data on a country-wide scale allow us to measure them (e.g. the micro-census in Switzerland and the National Transports Survey in France). In order to address possible inequality dynamics, we turned to a source of quantitative data dealing specifically with high mobilities, and conducted interviews to improve our understanding of individual situations and decision-making processes.

This article draws upon the second phase of the JobMob research looking at Germany, Spain, France and Switzerland. These quantitative data are completed by 30 qualitative interviews of people questioned using a life story method. The interviews were conducted exclusively in France among high mobile individuals (20) and former high mobile individuals (10). However, beyond the national contextual dimension, we put forward the hypothesis that the mechanisms of high mobility, the link between career and family life and how they are perceived, are not specific to France, and are relatively similar in the other countries covered by the JobMob survey. Thus, far from being merely an illustration of quantitative results, this qualitative analysis provides added value to better understand the mechanisms at work behind high mobilities. This article is based on an analysis of mixed methods, in other words, it combines quantitative and qualitative data in order to capitalise their mutual contributions and thus propose a more in-depth and complete analysis of high mobility (Hesse-Biber, 2010) and the potential inequalities that it causes and reveals.

Several forms of mobility are taken into account in this survey: long-duration commuting defined as travelling for over 2 hours per day at least 3 times a week; spending more than 60 nights per year away from home; couples' long-distance relationships; and moving house further than 50 km away.

The database that was created contains 1735 individuals surveyed in 2007 and again in 2011. Using panel data enables us to measure the changes in behaviours, and attempt to explain them. Analysis used in this article were chosen according to the longitudinal dimension of our quantitative data as: conditional change model (the situation in 2011 is analysed with, among explanatory variables, the 2007 situation), change score analysis (analysis of the evolution of a variable from 2007 to 2011), multivariate typologies (analysis that allows to compare the proportion of individuals from the first and second phase in each group of the typology). Furthermore, qualitative data were collected in France, on the one hand from effectively mobile people, in the form of long-duration commuting and nights spent away from home, and on the other hand, from people who belonged to this category in 2007 but no longer belong to it in 2011. Most results presented here were obtained through mixed methods analysis.

3. Job-related mobility to forge a career. Learnings from discourses and behaviours of high mobile people – perception of high mobility for professional reasons

3.1 Discourses

In general, high mobile persons who practice reversible forms of mobility consider mobility as a way of reconciling private and professional life. High mobility in its reversible forms (long duration commuting, long distance relationship and overnighting) allows combining a stable place of residence with work in one or more remote locations. Thus, reversible high mobility renders it possible to reconcile work and anchorages, which is consistent with the findings of the literature.

Table 1 Status and discourse of high mobile persons per country (share of persons concerned)

		Before (2007)			
		Germany	Spain	France	Switzerland
Overall perception	Worried about losing job	19%	45%	16%	14%
	Negative perception of mobility	23%	37%	11%	12%
	Mobility perceived as coercive	15%	22%	7%	10%
Benefits of high mobility	Mobility allowed to get out of a period of unemployment				
	Mobility allowed to keep my home	71%	58%	66%	78%
Disadvantages of high mobility	Never feels at home	15%	36%	7%	5%
	Is often tired	53%	53%	32%	34%
		After (2011)			
		Germany	Spain	France	Switzerland
Overall perception	Worried about losing job	16%	48%	46%	18%
	Negative perception of mobility	18%	15%	14%	11%
	Mobility perceived as coercive	2%	7%	23%	4%
Benefits of high mobility	Mobility allowed to get out of a period of unemployment	22%	54%	28%	13%
	Mobility allowed to keep my home	75%	43%	86%	69%
Disadvantages of high mobility	Never feels at home	19%	39%	11%	4%
	Is often tired	66%	36%	67%	27%

Source: JobMobilities and Family Lives, waves I+II

We quantified the proportion of people who recognized themselves in situations and qualifications of high mobility by country of residence. Before the economic crisis of 2008, we can already show that the context is already relatively tense in Spain and France as respondents are more likely to report themselves worried about their professional future. The Spaniards also fairly widely consider high mobility as negative and coercive. We also observe the high propensity of Swiss workers to

commute and thus give themselves through mobility the means to maintain their home. After the crisis, in 2011, we can already observe the persistence of a difficult context vis-à-vis employment in Spain. In this context, high mobility allowed to get out of a period of unemployment for more than half of the high mobile persons in that country. It does not allow them to maintain their housing, which is consistent with the aforementioned strong growth in absences from home. 39% of Spanish high mobile persons do not feel at home anywhere. However, despite the strong constraint that seems to be associated with these high mobilities, discourses on high mobility were not degraded and even improved when compared to those of residents of other countries. The French are more likely to perceive high mobility as a coercive phenomenon. One must understand thereby that being a high mobile person in 2011, is to be active, to be employed, and having a job when unemployment is high is a rather positive situation...

In qualitative interviews, high mobility perceptions are very different depending on the form of mobility. In a way that is coherent with the quantitative findings obtained during the first wave of the survey, long-duration commuting emerges as the least well-perceived form of mobility (Rüger & Ruppenthal, 2010). The array of long-duration commuters' perceptions thus ranges from very negative to positive and includes forms of resigned acceptance, especially in metropolitan areas:

[I have] the impression that, in the Paris area at any rate, transport is inevitable – it's a way of life for a lot of Parisians or people living in the Paris area. So I'll just have to accept it too. (Aurélie)

Overnighting perceptions are much better, because it reflects the imaginary of travel, of discovery and novelty – the opposite of commuting, which reflects instead everyday life and routine:

I also went to Poland, I've been to the Czech Republic, Italy and Germany, all for work. (...) Personally I really enjoyed it, it was fun, and I wanted to travel. (Philippe)

High mobility is perceived in a very contrasted way in the discourse of high mobile persons. It is thus, on the one hand an economic necessity on the other hand an intentional choice in which people find pleasure. It is an economic necessity for those who have become long-duration commuters in order to spatio-temporally combine several small professional activities located apart from each other or to those forced by economic duress to accept a job involving frequent absences from home. But high mobility is also choice and fun for those who have chosen mobile trades (military, train drivers, etc..) and those who take pleasure in travelling for the course of their professional activity. These few examples from interviews show the diversity of possible links between high mobility and work but also the willingness of people to shift towards high mobilities for professional reasons.

3.2 Behaviours

Tables 2 and 3 show the proportion of long duration commuter, absent from home, multi-mobiles (long duration commuter and absent from home) by country, respectively in 2007 and 2011. While the proportion of high mobile persons remained fairly stable in Germany and France, the number of long-term commuter clearly increased in Switzerland. This trend was also measured on a slightly different period (2005-2010) in the micro-census data (OFS, 2012).

The second result concerns the Spanish residents. In this country, the long-duration commuters fell in proportion and the number of absent from home has doubled over the same period. Considering simultaneously the country, the degree of urbanization, levels of accessibility and changes in the rate of unemployment in the residential area within a logistic regression model, it is clear that a

significant decline or a significant rise in unemployment greatly explains a stronger reliance on absence from home (the only statistically relevant trend). Although the link between cause and effect is difficult to test, it appears that the economic crisis, which particularly affected Spain, partly explains the growing importance of absence from home for professional reasons in that country. We try to clarify this link later in this article.

Table 2 Mobility experiences of active persons in 2007

2007		Long-duration commuter	Absent from home	Multi-mobile
Country	Germany	9%	7%	1%
	France	5%	6%	0%
	Spain	8%	3%	2%
	Switzerland	7%	3%	1%

Chi2 =23.22, p<0.005

Source : JobMob II, processed by LaSUR , weighting "countries equally weighted"

Table 3 Mobility experiences of active persons in 2011

2011		Long- duration commuter	Absent from home	Multi-mobile
Country	Germany	8%	7%	1%
	France	4%	5%	1%
	Spain	3%	6%	1%
	Switzerland	9%	3%	0%

Chi2 =24.94, p<0.005

Source : JobMob II, processed by LaSUR , weighting "countries equally weighted"

4. Inclination for high mobility. Presentation of some contrasted profiles

The data available regarding the inclination for high mobility, allows to analyze the dispositions towards respectively relocation to another area, moving abroad, long-duration commuting, weekend commuting as well as frequent work-related travel.

4.1 Individual multi-date typology of inclination towards mobility

Joint analysis of the five inclinations towards mobility hides important contrasts for a single individual between their willingness to move or to commute for example. Here we propose to use a typological framework in order to offer a simplified view of the inter-individual diversity from the standpoint of inclination towards mobility. Our ultimate goal being to explain the differences between the groups created. Insofar as we wish to specifically characterize intercensal changes for each individual, we propose to build a multi-date typology. Since this typology was constructed on the basis of only five variables we did not precede a factorial analysis to the ascending hierarchical classification. We get four very distinct groups: the disinclined towards mobility, the non-recurring, the anchored and the inclined towards mobility. They represent respectively 28%, 29%, 31% and 11% of our population. These groups are initially characterized using a simple pivot table with the variables used in their construction, followed by a double logistic regression modeling the combined effects of a number of socio-demographic and economic variables. This logistic regression was performed first on the active population only (integrating their hierarchical position) then the entire population, respectively known as models A and B.

The group disinclined towards mobility is a very homogeneous group in which individuals declare themselves indisposed both to commute long-durations or to relocate or move for work. The probability of being part of this group increases with age. Men are less present than women as well as single parent families or single individuals when compared to families with child(ren). The French and Swiss are over-represented in this group.

Table 4 : Definition of typology groups on inclination towards mobility, pivot table

		the disinclined towards mobility (28%)	the non-recurring (29%)	the anchored (31%)	the inclined towards mobility (11%)	Total
growing willingness to relocate to another region	yes	0%	29%	10%	68%	19%
	under certain conditions	2%	59%	25%	28%	29%
	no	98%	12%	65%	4%	52%
growing willingness to move abroad	yes	0%	27%	2%	69%	17%
	under certain conditions	1%	47%	16%	19%	21%
	no	99%	26%	82%	12%	62%
growing willingness for long-duration commuting	yes	0%	0%	62%	98%	31%
	under certain conditions	0%	27%	38%	2%	20%
	no	100%	73%	0%	0%	49%
growing willingness for weekend commuting	yes	3%	7%	8%	69%	13%
	under certain conditions	6%	17%	17%	16%	14%
	no	91%	76%	75%	15%	73%
growing willingness for as frequent work-related travel	yes	13%	34%	26%	77%	31%
	under certain conditions	12%	33%	22%	12%	21%
	no	75%	33%	52%	11%	48%

Source : JobMob II, processed by LaSUR , weighting "countries equally weighted"

At the other extreme is the group of people favourably inclined towards mobility, regardless of the type. It is composed of younger individuals, more men than women. They are also more often single individuals or couples without children. Family life appears ill suited to this strong inclination towards mobility. It should be noted that it seems to concern managers / bosses or independent rather than "employees."

The anchored define themselves by their attachment to their home. They generally refuse the idea of a move (in another region or abroad) and the possibility of dual-residence that would suggest weekend commuting. On the other hand daily commuting. On the other hand, daily commuting appears feasible. Anchoring seems to primarily occur in older populations, with lower levels of training. They are less often bosses or independent than the "simple" employees.

Table 5 Characterization of typology groups, logistic regressions (Odd ratio)

	Disinclined towards mobility		Non- recurring		Anchored		Inclined towards mobility	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
Sex : Female (réf.)								
Male	0.43**	0.41*	1.61**	1.79**	1.04	1.20*	1.99**	2.26**
Age : 29-38 years old (réf.)								
39-48 years old	1.41**	1.29*	0.79*	0.86	1.32*	1.40*	0.52**	0.57**
49-59 years old	2.00**	1.77*	0.47**	0.50**	1.47*	1.53*	0.55**	0.51**
Level of training: low (réf.)								
Average	1.13	1.14	1.48**	1.45**	0.68*	0.71*	0.83	0.77
High	1.00	0.94	2.38**	2.57**	0.47*	0.50*	0.75	0.77
Income level: average (réf.)								
Low	1.06	0.86	1.04	1.08	0.92	0.87	1.10	1.12
High	0.75*	0.86	1.06	1.02	1.19	1.02	1.12	1.13
Family: with partner, child (réf.)								
Live alone	0.53**	0.63*	1.14	1.03	0.90	0.98	2.08**	2.36**
Live with a partner	1.01	0.95	0.87	0.87	0.90	0.85	1.53**	1.52**
Live without partner with child	0.48**	0.69*	2.15**	2.01**	0.93	1.02	0.76	0.85
Hierarchy: employee (réf.)								
Manager/boss	0.86	-	1.49*	-	0.60*	-	1.72*	-
Middle positions	1.04	-	1.10	-	0.86	-	1.13	-
Independent	0.96	-	1.21	-	0.67*	-	1.72*	-
Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	2660	3236	2660	3236	2660	3236	2660	3236

* p < .05; ** p < .01

Source : JobMob II, processed by LaSUR , weighting "countries equally weighted"

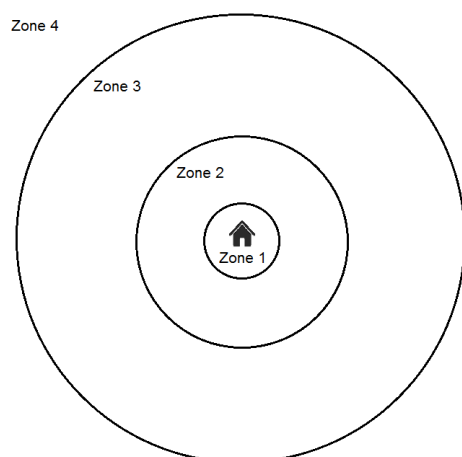
Finally, the group of non-recurring combines populations willing to relocate (although sometimes subject to conditions), but for which it is difficult to contemplate recurring daily or weekly mobility. These last two groups do not seem to be distinguished by a special inclination to move frequently for work. The younger people, men and those with relatively high levels of training are more represented in this group. Caring alone for a child or children is more easily associated with this situation, which underlines the importance of daily contingencies.

4.2 Jobs search area by types of associated mobility

Between 2007 and 2011, it has been shown that the behaviour of Spaniards in terms of high mobility have grown in terms of frequent absences from home while commuting decreased. Meanwhile, in the areas where unemployment increased the most, people's discourse more often refers to non-reversible mobility than elsewhere. Implying that long-duration commuting is not sufficient to get ahead financially or professionally.

According to these elements, we propose a chart organized around the home and areas where jobs can be searched. Closest to home, no need for long-duration commuting nor moving. Zone 1 is thus the local home-work mobility area. The second zone is an area which requires the active person to turn to long-duration commuting. Relative to the thresholds chosen in our research, the boundary between zone 1 and zone 2 is an isochron corresponding to a time frame of one hour between home and work. Finding employment in the third zone necessarily implies finding a second home or relocating, long-duration commuting fails to reach these places on a daily basis. The fourth and final zone is that of the unexplored, the impossible. People don't even consider job opportunities that are there.

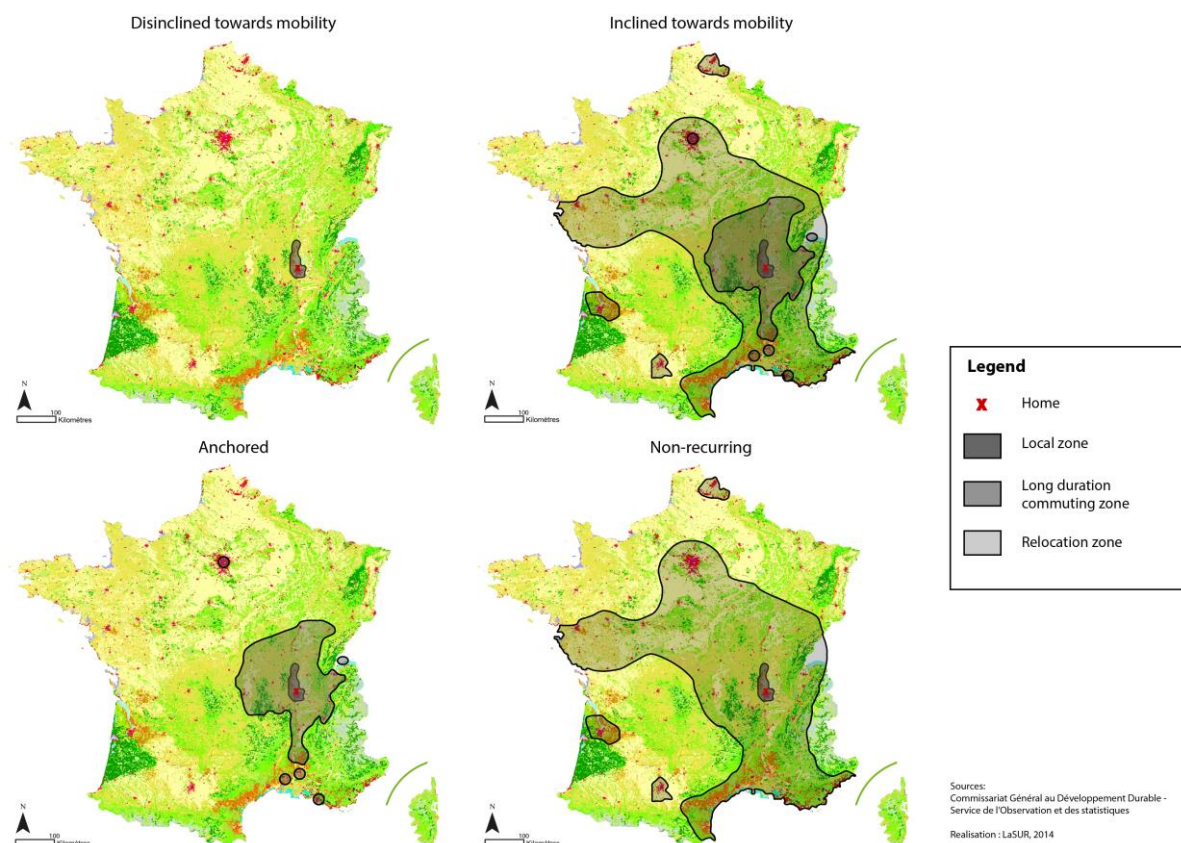
Figure 1 Jobs search areas by associated types of mobility



The extent of these areas will evolve depending on each person's mobility inclinations. One's preferences for relocating or recurring mobilities will play on the relative importance of zones 2 and 3. For the non-recurring group, zone 2 does not exist and zone 3 starts at the confines of zone 1. In contrast, the anchored group, not wishing to relocate, will limit their job search to zones 1 and 2. Zone 3 disappears in their case. The disinclined towards mobility group is confined to zone 1, the local mobility area. For them, the range of possible jobs will then be more limited. These extreme situations in terms of motility do not really exist and the

disinclined towards mobility group for example may have to choose a job that would be located beyond zone 1. However, such choices must be seen as difficult to make and to bear for the individuals concerned. Finally, facing a risk of unemployment or facing an actual unemployment, many people will expand zones 2 and 3 of job search, regardless of the skills they otherwise have...

Figure 2 Example of the spatialization of the jobs search zones by types of mobility inclinations²



These maps allow to more clearly highlight the impact of the development of the transport infrastructure supply. At the local level, improved service levels lead to an extension of zone 1 and its associated local home-work mobility. A high-speed rail line or a new highway will allow to mechanically extend zone 2 at the expense of zone 3. This may partly explain the increase in long-duration commuting that we observed in Switzerland between 2007 and 2011. High-speed Infrastructures are also accompanied by a breaking-up of the long-duration commuting area, reinforcing the tunnelling effect between cities. Finally facilitating residential mobility allows extending zone 3 and expanding the range of possibilities in terms of employment. All these measures can be understood from the perspective of facilitating access to employment. They partly challenge the role of family and social anchorages and will not have the same impact on individuals according to their motility.

² Please note: the zones shown on these maps have not been delineated on the basis of precise isochronous calculations or even data recorded through interviews. The maps are included for illustrative purposes only.

4.3 Evolution in mobility inclination

Table 6 Logistic regression of the growing inclination to different forms of high mobility

	Growing inclination to mobility	Growing inclination to long-duration commuting	Growing inclination to dual residency	Growing inclination to frequent trips
30-39 yrs (ref.)				
40-49 yrs	0.709*	1.598**	0.684	0.775
50-59 yrs	0.537*	1.778**	0.675	0.548**
Male	1.269*	1.195	1.676**	1.172
Female (ref.)				
Without post-compulsory training	0.864	0.761	0.878	0.656*
Secondary (II)				
Tertiary	0.795	0.751	0.943	1.221
Drop in employment rate	1.44*	1.752**	1.126	1.548*
Stable employment rate				
Increase in employment rate	1.047	0.792	0.788	0.713
Had a child between 2007 and 2011	0.479**	0.795	0.243**	0.329**
Did not have a child between 2007 and 2011 (ref.)				
Still in a couple with the same partner (ref.)				
Still not part of a couple	1.155	1.332	0.853	0.997
Became part of a couple	1.063	2.407**	1.473	1.458
Changed partner	0.959	1.496	0.269	0.445
No longer in a couple	1.089	1.146	1.657	1.005
Stable salary (ref.)				
Lower salary	1.566**	1.512*	2.272**	1.02
Higher salary	0.826	0.929	0.678	0.585**
Significance	.000	.000	.000	.000
N (non-weighted)	1245	1273	1273	1275

* p < .05; ** p < .01; weighted data

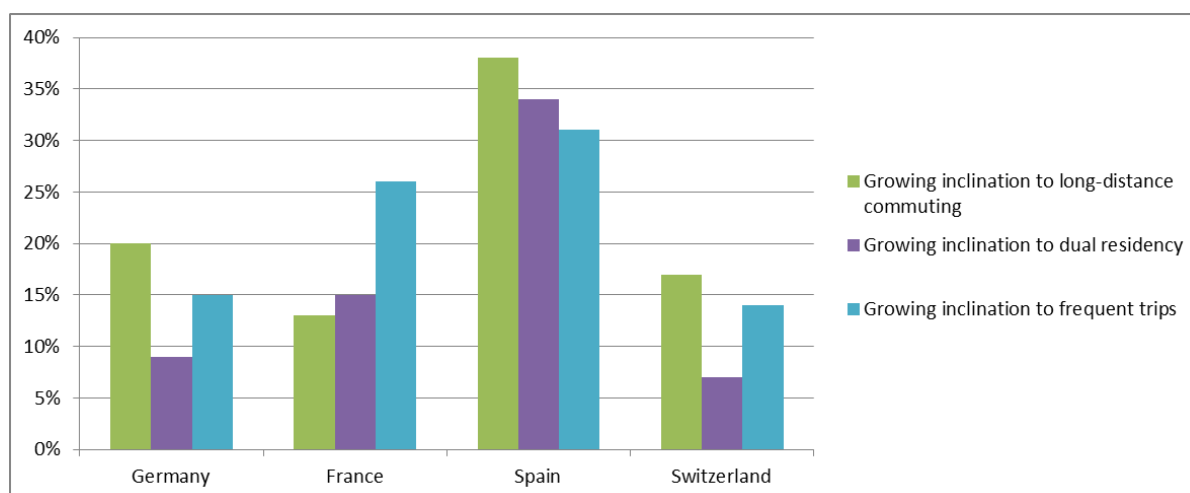
Source: JobMobilities and Family Lives, waves I+II

Each of the groups in our typology is composed partly of individuals from 2007 and individuals from 2011 (which incidentally are the same people ...). It is interesting then to separate each group in two according to the wave involved to compare the compositions of the subgroups therefore created. For the sake of readability we do not present here the results of the comparison but summarize the main findings. For the reluctant to move group, the economic component is significantly strengthened in 2011 compared to 2007. The more

affluent (compared to middle classes) are less likely to be among the disinclined in 2011 and more likely to be among the non-recurring.

To confirm on an easier way these results, we have specifically analysed the growing inclination to mobility. The first thing to emerge is that younger people and men are more often inclined to practise high mobilities. In parallel, we can observe that in 2007, income was not linked to these inclinations, while a very close link emerges in 2011. This link indicates a much greater inclination for people with the lowest incomes. Analysed on the basis of a “change score” type model, the role played by income is confirmed. People whose income dropped between the two phases are thus 1.5 times more likely to declare themselves more inclined to long-duration commuting, and 2.3 times more likely to declare themselves more inclined to have a dual residence. This tendency is the same when the rate of activity drops, highlighting the role that unemployment can play in how people change their projects and become mobile. Looking for work, or the fear of unemployment thus encourages people (among whom are the wealthy and less wealthy, the well-educated and less well-educated people, etc.) to count on distance and significant travel time. In this sense and for these people, high mobility is a way of responding to society’s pressure to be mobile and flexible, not in order to have a brilliant career, but to avoid losing their job and earning less money.

Figure 3 growing inclination to different forms of high mobility depending on country of residence



Source: JobMobilities and Family Lives, waves I+II

Figure 3 allows to confirm the impact of unemployment risks on inclination to high mobility. In Spain, where the economic crisis is especially strong, people declare to be willing to endure long-duration commute, dual residency, and to make some frequent trips to improve their work situation.

5. From mobility readiness to motility

In order to discuss the possible links that may exist between the ability and the willingness to be highly mobile, we have created a multi-date typology of motility (Kaufmann 2011). This typology was created using the variables described above and contributing to the definition of access, skills and inclinations. To construct this typology and ensure that the significance of the groups created could be perpetuated over time, we made use of what is known as a multi-date typology (see methodology section). To construct the typology, we successively carried out a factor analysis (to limit the information contained in the variables initially used) and an Ascending Hierarchical Classification analysis (enabling us to regroup individuals according to the details supplied in the lines of the factor analysis). Six groups were thus created:

- The “Weakly Motile” group: relatively weak access, very weak skills, very little inclination to be mobile.
- The “Ready to Move” group: below-average access, poor skills but, on the other hand, strongly inclined to be mobile.
- The “Reversible” group: good contextual and personal access (except for possessing a car), very good skills, however, little inclination to relocate or live away from home (instead, commuting or trips).
- The “Reluctant to Move” group: relatively strong contextual and personal access, very strong skills, very little inclination to be mobile.
- The “Non-reversible” group: very good contextual and personal access, very strong linguistic skills, inclined to be mobile but in a non-recurring way, i.e. choosing to relocate rather than commute.
- The “Highly Motile” group: very good personal and contextual access, strong skills and very inclined to be mobile.

We shall not be looking at the “Reversible” and “Non-reversible” groups, which highlight people’s different choices between recurring spatial mobilities and residential mobilities. We will focus on a second differentiation between weakly motile and strongly motile groups, which form two extreme groups from the point of view of motility. Lastly, a third differentiation emerges between the “Ready to Move” and “Reluctant to Move” groups: this directly reflects the encounter between ability and willingness. Subsequently, we shall focus only on these four latter groups. They can be positioned in a cross tabulation reflecting the ability and willingness dimensions presented above.

Figure 4 Convergence of ability and willingness in the multivariate typology of motility

		skills and access	
		weak	high
Readiness to high mobility	weak	Weakly motile	Reluctant to move
	high	Ready to move	Highly motile

Figure 4 emphasises the total separation that may exist between the abilities to carry out these mobilities and the willingness to do so. We find as many people who are little able but very willing to be mobile as people who are unwilling but very able. In the first instance, mobility is necessary for the individual to improve his or her professional situation, and in the second instance, the individual refuses high mobility despite good access and strong skills. This distinction is very important when taking inequalities into consideration because those who accept travel without having good access or strong skills are shown to be those whose income and level of education are relatively low, and are also most often single women with children. These elements lead us to consider these people as vulnerable. On the contrary, however, those who choose not to travel despite significant possibilities are, overall, financially well-off and well educated. In 4 years, the “Ready to Move” group has grown by 21% while the “Reluctant to Move” group shrank by 10%. These trends lead us to believe that commuting mobilities are in the process of becoming a necessity for a growing proportion of the population.

Table 7 Motility groups according to country of residence in 2007

	France	Germany	Spain	Switzerland
weakly motiles	33%	10%	40%	25%
Reluctant to move	26%	32%	15%	32%
Ready to move	9%	10%	22%	3%
Reversible	7%	12%	8%	12%
Non-reversible	13%	19%	7%	18%
Highly motile	12%	17%	9%	10%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Chi2 =198.79, p<0.001

Source: JobMobilities and Family Lives, waves I+II

Table 8 Motility groups according to country of residence in 2011

	France	Germany	Spain	Switzerland
weakly motiles	27%	13%	33%	24%
Reluctant to move	23%	28%	7%	31%
Ready to move	15%	7%	29%	5%
Reversible	14%	21%	6%	19%
Non-reversible	15%	16%	6%	15%
Highly motile	6%	16%	20%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Chi2 =290.16, p<0.001

Source: JobMobilities and Family Lives, waves I+II

Tables 7 and 8 present motility groups according to country of residence in 2007 and 2011. Spaniards appear to be specifically numerous in the group named “Ready to move”. Again, the effect of economic crisis and the link between unemployment and mobility inclinations are highlighted there.

Even with low skills, people might consider recurring mobilities or relocating to avoid unemployment. In fact, people who were weakly motile in 2007 are more often unemployed in 2011 (12% having lost their jobs between 2007 and 2011 against 7% for the others). Similar results were also found in Spain by Ahn et al. (1999) since they showed in their work that the unemployed who adopted a positive attitude vis-à-vis the prospect of relocating to find a job were actually more likely to find one.

6. Conclusion

The results emphasize in the first place the important role that mobility plays in access to employment. This is equally apparent in discourse, in the reported inclination and in practice. In times of crisis, people adapt their mobility to better meet the labor market requirements and are led to think about high mobility practices (long-duration commuting, dual-residency, or frequent trips) more concretely. At the same time, moving sometimes prove necessary to find a job, in comparison, it can be assumed that the job offers located in a perimeter that would allow commuting are absent or insufficient. The right to mobility in general, and the right to high mobility in particular, daily or residential, short and long-duration, thus appears helpful to facilitate access to employment.

Especially in the ability to become mobile which changes rapidly as a result of economic constraints and then reveals other forms of inequalities related to access and mobility skills. These forms of inequality also take a spatial dimension according to the forms and intensity of high mobilities to which individuals are capable of consenting.

It also shows the willingness of people to internalize the mobility and flexibility injunction in times of economic crisis. This would tend to show that this is not just a discourse but the implementation of the discourse, which redraws the contours of the social issues around mobility.

The very clear separation between being able to be mobile and wanting to be so is, therefore, an essential key for understanding the inequalities linked to mobility in general. In the final section, we outlined a topic for discussion that deserves to be followed up and completed in further publications. However, it appears that economic necessities, among them the need to find employment, are a driving force that encourages the inclination to become highly mobile. In other words, due to financial obligations and the need to find work, some people are more willing to become highly mobile even if they enjoy neither good access nor strong skills. They are then very likely to become highly mobile for professional reasons but to perceive this high mobility relatively negatively. Additional analysis are needed of these people, their characteristics, where they live, and more globally, how to help them reconcile employment, family life and mobilities.

From a political point of view, it is not merely a question of facilitating access to high mobility for those who wish to become highly mobile. It is equally – and this issue will most certainly become increasingly important in the coming years – a question of guaranteeing the possibility of not becoming highly mobile if this is desired. Guaranteeing everyone the right to mobility means participating in improving access to employment, and this is essential. But this approach reinforces a norm - the pressure to be mobile - which can have social consequences on the quality and conditions of life for people with weak mobility skills or who have no plan to become mobile. The right to mobility and the right to immobility deserve to be considered together...

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